

TALES OF
FROM THE
CRYPT



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

REALLY BACK AGAIN! BACK FOR MORE GHOULS AND GHOULSIE! WELL, COME IN! COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR AND I'LL TELL YOU OUT YOUR SHARE! IT'S ME, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, YOUR HOST IN HORROR! JUST SET YOURSELF DOWN ON THAT FOAM-SWELLING, EARTHWARE URN OVER THERE, AND I'LL ENTERTAIN YOU! WHAT'S IN THE CRYPT, OH, THAT'S WHAT'S LEFT OF WHITNEY WHITFIELD! WHICH HEF WELL, YOU JUST SETTLE DOWN AND I'LL LET YOU HEAR WHITNEY'S STORY IN HIS VERY OWN WORDS! READY? WHITNEY CALLS THIS GADABOUT CREATION...

GAS-TLY PROSPECTS!



JEFF WHITFIELD'S MY NAME! THOUGH SOME OF THE BOYS FROM THE MASON TRAIN TO JOINED UP WITH TO COME WEST TO CALIFORNIA WAS NICKNAMED ME 'WHITNEY'! THAT'S 'CAUSE I WAS NO CHICKEN, AND MY HAIR'S TURNED BROWN LONG YEARS BEFORE! BUT I'D BEEN A PROSPECTIN' FOOL ALL WHILE, AND WHEN THEY FOUND THE FELLER'S STUFF OVER AT SUTTER'S GOLD MINE IN 1848, I PACKED MY DUFF AND HEADED WEST WITH THE REST OF THE FORTY-NINERS...

WELL, WHITNEY! HE'LL BE IN CALIFORNIA BY THIS TIME NEXT WEEK! WHAT'S YOUR PLANS?

ME? I'M HEADING NORTH FOR THEM GOLD FIELDS! Gonna STAKE ME OUT A CLAIM AND FAR ME A FORTUNE!

WE'VE THROWN DOWN MY PLATES! I HAD LOTS O' HIGH HOPES IN THESE DATES! SOON AS WE HIT SACRAMENTO, I LIT OUT UP THE VALLEY. KEPT GOIN' STRAIGHT! TRY 'BOUT THIS LAND'S ALL STAGED OUT!

TEN MILES FURTHER UP—EVERYTHING



RIGHT TIME WE LONG FING OUT THAT MOST O' THE GOLD TO BEER PLAYED OUT BY THE TIME THAT I GOT THESESE YELLOW-MUSTARD DIRTPIECES TAKEN CLIPPER SHIPS ROUND THE CAPE O' GOOD HOPE AN' HEATED UP OVERLANDERS TO THE FIELDS...



FINALLY I DECIDED TO TRY UP IN THE MOUNTAINS I'D HEARD TALE ABOUT RICH DIPS BEEN FOUND! I BOUGHT ME A SHOTGUN SO I COULD HUNT MY OWN MITTLES, A FISHING AN' A SHOVEL T' DIG WITH, AN' SOME CANNED BEANS! SPENT EVERY LAST DIME I OWNED...

GETTER TAKE S'MORE ONE SHELLS, STRANGERT! GOTTTA WATCH OUT FOR OLIVE JUMPER'S UP IN THE HILLS!



LE ME TELL YOU, THAT'S BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY THUM CALIFORNIA HILLS! TOWERIN' PINE WHISPERS' OVERHEAD! RUSTY STREAMS CASCADES' OVER ROGUES! QUIET LAKES LAYER LIKE LOOKIN'-GLASSIN' I PITCHED ME A TENT NEAT TO ONE OF THEM QUIET LAKES AND MADE ME A CAMP...

THIS SHOT IS PURPLE, BUT IT AIN'T GETTIN' ME BIGHT 'F COURSE, I START DODGIN'!



IT WERE GOLD ALL RIGHT! AND LOADS! WHAT A RICH DEPOSIT THAT THERE STREAM MUSTA BEEN HOLLIN' THEM BUBBLES DOWN FROM THE HILLS SINCE TIME RECKON... AN' THEY WERE ALL LYIN' RIGHT THERE FOR ME...

I'LL TAKE ME A FEAT TO CLEAR OUT FACE STRIKE! I'M BRIGHT BRIGHT!



I TIRD A FEW SHOTS WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS! THEN I FOUND ME A STREAM FEEDIN' INTO THE LAKE! AND HAD A FAST-RUNNIN' STREAM, A-COMIN' DOWN FROM THEM HILLS AND A-BUBBLIN' OUT INTO THE QUIET LAKE... I TIRD IT ALL UP 'BOUTIN' THE SHOT...



SO I STARTED PANIN'! I FIGURED ON CLEARIN' OUT THE MOUTH OF THE STREAM WHERE SHE EMPTIED INTO THE LAKE... THEN WORKIN' MY WAY UP-STREAM TIL I'D PLAYED THE STREAM OUT...



THEN, 'BOUT A MONTH AFTER I'D STARTED WORKIN' ON GLAIN, IT HAPPENED. THIS BIG BURLY-LOOKIN' GUNNER SHOW UP TO PAID ME 'BOUT FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH O' GOLD BY THAT TIME AN' WAS FEELIN' PRETTY BOOGIE THAT WAS WHERE I MADE MY *ONE MISTAKE*? I SURE HED BEEN SPIN' ON ME...AH, I LET HIM GET TOO CLOSE...



THE TWO RED-HOT LEAD SLUGS CATCH ME IN THE BUTT AN' I FEEL OVER THE PAIN IS SOMETHIN' AWFUL. AN' I'M BOYLIN' MAD! WHEN HE COMES OVER TO SEE IF I'M DOIN' FOR, I KICK OUT AT HIM! HIS GOLT GUN POPS!



I KEEF GOIN', EVER THOUGH THE PAIN IS KILLIN' ME BACK O' ME. I HEAR HIM COMIN' SHOUT WHEN HE SPIES MY '45...



HE WHIPS OUT HIS GOLT '45 AND PAYS IT THREE BEFORE I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS...



THE SUN LANDS OFF IN THE BRUSH AND THE BURLY GUY DRIES AFTER IT'S SEEN MY GUNNE AND, SETTIN' MY FEET, HOOCHIN' IT FOR GONE...

LORDY, THEM SLUGS! BLAST! WHERE'S THAT JAWBONE? IN MY CURSED IRON HOOCHIE?



A BLUE WHISTLE PAST MY EAR AS I TUMBLE INTO CAMP! I GRAB MY SHOTGUN AND THE BOX OF SHELLS, CRASH BEHIND A ROCK, AN' LET GO WITH BOTH BARRELS...

HERE, YU BURDERSH! SHARE? NOW, WE'RE EVEN-STEVEN...



THE BURLY GUNNER MUSTA CAUGHT THE BURLIGH SLUG ON THE SHOTGUN BARREL, 'CAUSE HE'S BEHIND A TREE WHEN THE BUCKSHOT PEPPERS HOOCHIE HIM...

BLAH, STRANGER! I CAN HAZZ! LET'S SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN HOLD OUT WITH TWO SLUGS IN YOUR BUTT!



SO HE SAT THERE. HIM BEHIND
THE BIG OL' PINE, AND ME CROUCHIN'
BEHIND THAT ROCK, BLEEDIN'
LIKE A LEAKY WATER BAR.

ONE OF US HAD
NOT TO FALL
ASLEEP, AN'
I WASN'T TIRED!

OH, LORDY
IF WE DON'T
GET ME, I'LL
BLEED TO
DEATH!

I STUFF THE SHOTGUN SHELLS
FROM THE BOX INTO MY POCKETS
AND SIT BACK TO WAIT. I
KNOW HE HAD TO DIE, BUT
I AIN'T SORRY HE GOT HIM LIVIN'
EITHER...

YOU'LL NEVER TAKE THIS
CLAIM, YUN SHABE! I'LL GET
YUN FIRST! I SWEAR IT!

I'M WAITIN'
OL' TIMIN'!

I GUSS I MUSTA PASSED OUT
FROM THE PAIN, 'CAUSE THE NEXT
THING I KNOW, MY EYES POP
OPEN AND HE'S STANIN' OVER ME
WITH A KNIFE.

THA'LL TEACH YUN NOT
TO FALL ASLEEP!

I'M GRINNIN' AT HIM, AND HE'S GRINNIN' BACK AT ME?
THE KNIFE IS DRENCHIN' BLOOD. I TRY TO GRAB FOR
MY GUN, BUT I CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE. FUNNY, BUT
I DON'T FEEL ANY PAIN, EITHER! SO I KNOWS
THAT I'M DEAD...

STOP GRINNIN' AT ME.
YUN OLD SOB!

BUT I JUST KEEP GRINNIN'! HE SPITS AT ME, AN'
HIS AM GETS MY PICK-AXE AN' SHOVEL.

I'M SORRY, SHABE YUN, YUN OLD BEEDER!
THEY I'M GONNA FINISH WORKIN' YUN CLAIM!
ONLY NOW, IT'S MY CLAIM!

SO HE STARTS DIGGIN'. THE GROUND IS HARD AND
HE CURSES A LOT. I JUST KEEP GRINNIN' AT HIM.
HE'S GOTTEN MADDER AND MADDER.

AH, TO HECK WITH IT! THIS
IS GOOD ENOUGH!

HE GRABS ME AND DRAGS ME OVER TO THE SHALLOW
GRAVE HE'S DUG OUT OF THE ROCKY LOAM. HE
KNOCKS ME IN.

THESE, REST IN PEACE,
YUN OLD PRAYER-SOBS!

SO I ROLL INTO THE GRAVE AND LAND FACE UP.
STARN' AT ME AND GRINNIN' AT HIM! AND HE'S RED
AS A BEET. HE'S SO MAD! HE TELLS AT ME AND
FLINGS A SHOVEL-FULL OF DIRT INTO MY FACE...

STOP STARN' AT ME! STOP
GRINNIN' AT ME! SHOT
YOUR EYES WHEN YER
DEAD! CLOSE YER
MOUTH!



I FIGURE I LAY THERE A WEEK OR
SO IN THE GROUND! THE CRAWLIN'
THINGS START WORKIN' ON ME! I
DON'T FEEL 'EM, BUT I KNOW
THEY'RE THERE! RAISE I'M HEAR
'EM SCRATCHIN' ROUND ME! I THOUL'
AFTER A LONG TIME, I HEAR
SOMETHIN' UP ABOVE, CLAWIN'
AT THE GROUND.



IT'S A WILD CAT SCRATCHIN' ME UP!
IT CLEARS THE SOO OFF MY
FACE AND SHOULDERS, GRASS
MY COLLAR BETWEEN ITS FANGS,
AND PULLS ME UP TO A SITTIN'
POSITION...



FOURTY BOOK I'M ALL, COVERED, AN' LASTIN' RICE AN'
DIRT IN MY GRAVE! I HEAR HIS HOB-NAILLED BOOTS
CRUNCHIN' AROUND OVER ME AS HE STAMPS THE
GROUND DOWN HARD-AS-HELL MONT. LOUDLY CRUM-
BLIN'...

HEH, HEH! YOU WERE WRONG,
DR. OLD TIMERR! I GOT YOU
FIRST, AFTER ALL!



THEN, AFORE IT KIN START RAPPIN'
ME TO SHREDS, ANOTHER WILD CAT
SHOWS UP...



RIGHT AWAY, THEY START SPITTIN' AND HOWLIN' AT
EACH OTHER! I BIT THERE, GRINNIN' AT THEM...



THEY SAIL INTO ONE ANOTHER, BUT SOON THE ONE
THAT DIBS ME UP GOES OFF A-SCREECHIN' AND
A-HURIN' HIS WOUNDSTHEN THE LATECOMER WHAT
WON COMES OVER, BIFFS AT ME, AND LOOPS OFF
HIMSELF! I FIGGUS I'M TOO FAR GONE TO MAKE
GOOD EASTIN' ANYMORE...



“SO I SIT THERE STARIN’ AT MY TENT, LISTENIN’ TO THE SNOW FALLIN’ DOWN! HE SLEEPS RIGHT THROUGH THE NIGHT.”



“IN THE MORNING, HE COMES OUT OF THE TENT! FOR A MINUTE I THINK HIS EYES IS SOMA FEF RIGHT OUTTA HIS HEAD.”



“HE COMES OVER TO ME, LOOKIN’ A LITTLE GREEN AROUND THE GILLS. HIS MOUTH IS DRIBBLIN’ A LITTLE BRITTLE, LIKE HE’S BEEN SUCKIN’ ON A BAR OF SOAR.”



“BUT I JUST SIT THERE STARIN’ AT HIM! I TELL HIM GETTIN’ DOWN ‘CAUSE HIS EYES IS RED-OPENIN’ UP! HE PULLS OFF AND KICKS ME IN THE FACE, AND I FLOP BACKWARDS INTO MY SHALLOW SHAVE.”



“DO YOU WOON’T STAY ARMED, EH? YOU BLASTED OLD BEEREN?!”



“HE SCRABBLIES OFF TOWARD THE TENT AND COMES BACK WITH THE PICK-AXE AN’ SHOVEL! HE SHARS HOLD OF ME AND GRABS ME DOWN T’THE LAKE.”



“WELL, WELL SEE
IF YOULL STAY IN
THE WATER!”

“THEIR HE HAULS ME INTO THE LAKE! HE PULLS ME OUT AS DEEP AS HE CAN GO AND LETS ME SINK TO THE BOTTOM! I GRIP AT HIS HOE-MAULED BOOTS AS I FIGHT.”



THE WATER STARTS FILLIN' INTO MY GUTS. AN' SWOLLEN INTO MY LUNGS! SOME RUGGY FISH DONE 'ROUND...PEERIN' AT ME! ONE OF 'EM TAKES A SWIP AT MY HAND! I SWIM BACK AND FORTH LAZILY...



WHERE THE RUSHIN' STREAM EMPTIES INTO THE LAKE, A RUGGY CURRENT SWIRLIN' I'M LOSIN' MY GRIP IN THE MIDDLE OF IT! PRETTY SOON, I'M TURNIN' AND TWISTIN', AND THE ROPES IS RUSHIN' ON THE SHARP EDGES OF THE ROCKS...



IT TAKES ABOUT A WEEK FOR THE ROPES TO SWIN THROUGH 'BEAUFORT' THE FISH HAVE BEEN PICKIN' AWAY... AND IN THE TIME I'M CUT FREE, IT'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE! I'M ALL WATER-LOGGED AND WELATED, AND THE BUBBLES THAT HAVE FORMED IN MY INSIDES FORCE ME TO THE SURFACE...



I GUESS THOSE CRAZY CURRENTS MUSTA CRASHED ME HOUR AND HOUR, 'CAUSE I POP UP RIGHT AT THE MOUTH OF THE STREAM WHERE BULL-BOY IS PANNIN'! HE REALLY FALLEN IN THE WATER WHEN HE SHOT ME...



HE STARTS TELLIN' AND SCREAMIN' AT ME, BUT I JUST STARE AT HIM. HIM AND HIS REAL RUGGY-LIKE! ONLY I DON'T LOOK TOO RUGGED! ANYHOW THAT IS I SMELL PRETTY BAD FOOF! AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT HE COMPLAINS OF AS HE DRAGS ME ANYMORE...



HE LURES ME OVER TO THE CLEAR INN AND LEAVES ME IN THE MIDDLE! THEN HE STARTS DRAGGIN' OVER LOGS HE'S BEEN COLLECTIN'...



I GUESS HE WAS GETTIN' READY TO BUILD HIMSELF A CABIN WITH THEM LOGS AND STAY OVER THE WINTER! ANYWAY HE DECIDES TO SACRIFICE IT ALL FOR ME! HE TOSSES ME ON THE FILE...



I'M LEAPIN' THERE ON THE FILE OF LOGS IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE CLEARIN'. ALL AROUND, THE BRUSH
IS DRY, 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN A DRY SUMMER' RYANT
SAID, THE FLAMES ARE LEAPIN' TROUND ME... .



THE'RE A TERRIFIC BOOM, AND I BLOW OFF THE
SHOT-GUN SHELLS I'D PACKED INTO MY POCKETS GO
OFF LIKE A DYNAMITE CHARGE! I RIP INTO A THOU-
SAND PIECES, AND THE EXPANDING GASOLINE AND COM-
PRESSSED STEAM INSIDE ME SENDS THE FLAMIN'
HUMS FLYIN' THROUGH THE AIR...



WAFF A FIRE I START' IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES, THE WHOLE
CLEARIN' IS SURROUNDED BY A CIRCLE OF FLAME. A WHITE HOT
WALL ROLLIN' IN ON THE BURLY CRITTER! HE DON'T STAB A CHARGE
O' BETTER THROUGH IT! TAKIN' LONG 'TIL HE STARTS SWEEIN'
AT PAIN...



... BUT AFTER A WHILE IT'S QUET, DEFT FOR THE CRACKLIN' OF
THE FIRE AS IT SWEEPS ON THROUGH THE DRY WOODED HILLS! I
GUESS I AM REST EASY NOW! I MURK FINISHED MY WORK!

THE HEAT IS TERRIFIC OF COURSE, I DON'T FEEL
NOTHIN', BUT I CAN HEAR MY WATER-COOLED BODY
BURNIN' AND A-POUN'! I GUESS I BLACKED UP A
BIT, AND THE WATER IN MY POTTED CLOTHES DRIES
OUT SOON! THEY START TO BURN! I'VE SENSE
SOMETHIN' STRANGE GOIN' ON INSIDE ME... LIKE I'M
EXPLORIN' ON THE STEAM AND GASES... THAT...



SCREAM OF ME LANDS ON THE BURLY GUY, AND HE'S
SO BUSY PELLIN' ME OFF IN HIM AND PULLIN' OUT HIS
BURNIN' CLOTHES THAT HE DON'T NOTICE I'VE ALSO
LANDED ALL AROUND THE EDGE OF THE CLEARIN',
EVERYWHERE...



HEH, HEH! YOU FLAME BOY!, WHITNEY!
AND IT SHOT MEA A... AND... IT BURE
WAS A DOOZY OF A TALE, EH, KID-
DEET THIS YARN TO MY ADOLF
EDITORS, THEY CONFESSED THAT
THEY NEVER KNEW A COMIC COULD
WRITE HIS OWN STORY! I
STRAIGHTENED THEM OUT, THOUGH!
WHITNEY COULDN'T WRITE HIS OWN
NAME! HE dictated
THE WHOLE THING TO
ME! HEH, HEH! A
REAL CRASH WRITER!
EH? WELL, NOW I'LL
TURN YOU OVER TO
THE KARL-KEEPER.
I'LL SEE YOU
LATER ONE!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

GREETINGS, GOLF BRAVE! SHOULD IT BE ME, THE VAULT-KEEPER, AGAIN? TIME TO GUEST-SPOT THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAD CHIC MORE! SO BRAIN YOUR BATTERED BOOKS INTO THE KNUCKLE AND STRETCH THEM OUT ON THAT CASE OF ICE OVER THERE! IT'LL KEEP YOU COOOL... WHICH IS THE PROPER MOOD FOR THIS CHILLING TALE OF ICE, SNOW, AND HOT LOVE I CALL

A Hollywood Ending!



HUGH HOWARDS, FAMOUS HOLLYWOOD MOVIE PRODUCER AND CELEBRATED SPORTSMAN AND WORLD TRAVELER, GUIDED HIS PRIVATE TRANSPORT PLANE LOW OVER THE GLARING ICE-FIELDS OF THE FROZEN NORTH...

THERE'S AN AMAZING SETTLEMENT DOWN THERE, MR. HOWARD!

ALL RIGHT, EVANS! TELL THE PUBLICITY BOYS TO FASTEN THEIR SAFETY BELTS! WE'RE GOING IN!



DOWN BELOW THE GLEAMING AIRPLANE! FUR-CLAD FIGURES DANCED FROM THEIR HELDS, WAVING AND CHATTERING...

THEY SEE! THERE'S A LEVEL SPOT...
WE! CAST OF THE SETTLEMENT!
I'M GOING TO BRING 'EM DOWN ON IT!



SOON THE SKY-SIANTS SKI-RUNNERS TOUCHED THE SURFACE OF THE CHILLED ICE EXPANSE AND CAME TO A STOP! THE DOLMIS ESKIMO POPULATION GROVED ABOUT THE PLANE...

WELL! CHOR YOU BUY'S! LET'S GET SOME PRO TONES AND SET OUT OF HERE!

YEE, MR HOWARD!

GRAY, SIR?



MR HOWARD STEPPED FROM THE PLANE AND ADDRESSED THE GATHERED ARCTIC INHABITANTS...

ANYBODY HERE SPEAK ESKIMO?

I SPEAK ENGLISH!



MR HOWARD TURNED TO THE FUR-CLAD FIGURE THAT STEPPED FORWARD THROUGH THE CROWD! IT WAS A GIRL...

GOOD! MY NAME IS HOWARD! HUSH HOWARD! I'M A HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER! DAY! YOU'RE NOT AN ESKIMO!

NO, MR HOWARD! I AM AN AMERICAN!



HUSH STUDIED THE ATTRACTIVE GIRL STARING BEFORE HIM! HE'D NEVER SEEN A MORE PHOTO-COMIC FACE...

YOU SAY YOU LIVE THERE... IN THAT SNACK? IS IT HEATED?

WHY, YES! THERE'S AN OIL STOVE IN IT! WHAT MAKES YOU ASK?



THE GIRL SMILED AT HUSH! HER EYES SPARKLED! SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THESE IN THE ESKIMO PEOPLE! THAT FORGOTTEN WOODEN BUILDING IS MY HOME! MY GUARDIAN PROTECTED ME HERE SINCE FEARS AGO!



HUSH TOOK THE GIRL'S WITCHED HAND AND STARTED TOWARD THE SNOW-LADEN FRAME BUILDING...

CHOR! I WANT TO TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR FIGURE! WELL, REALLY NOW, MR FIGURE!



LOOK! DON'T GET IN A HUFF! I'M A HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER! THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS! IF YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES, I CAN MAKE A STAR OUT OF YOU!

A...A STAR! WHAT'S THAT?

HUH? HOW LONG DID YOU SAY YOU'VE BEEN UP HERE? SIX YEARS? DADDY... THAT'S MY GUARDIAN. DOCTOR WHITEMEET BROUGHT ME HERE AFTER THE ACCIDENT.

ACCIDENT? YES! MY REAL FATHER AND I WERE IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT! FATHER WAS DOCTOR WHITEMEET'S COLLABORATOR! FATHER WAS KILLED! I LOST MY MEMORY. I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT MY FATHER LOOKED LIKE!

AMNESIA... HUH? I GOT SO ANTICIPATION, 'DADDY' BROUGHT ME HERE! HE HAD TO TEACH ME ALL OVER AGAIN! I'VE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING! I'D EVEN FORGOTTEN HOW TO WALK! AND FACE IT, IT WAS ANGRY! BUT 'DADDY' WAS PATIENT, AND I LEARNED QUICKLY.



THE GIRL SLIPPED OUT OF HER HOODED PARKA AND PULLED OFF HER PUR PURPLE HUSH GLOVES! FOLLOWED HER EXAMPLE! FINALLY SHE STOOD BEFORE HIM CLAD ONLY IN A SIMPLE SWEATER AND SLACKS...

TERRIFIC! TERRIFIC! TERRY! IT'S SHIRT FOR WHAT'S YOUR NAME? THERESA! TERRY ASLEEP?



THEN YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT FAMOUS? BUT LOOK... WHO'S BETTER THAN OFF OUR PERIOD NOW THAT WE'RE BACK?



YOU'RE A SWEET KID, TERRY! I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU! WHERE IS YOUR GUARDIAN... THE DOCTOR WHITEMEET? I WANT TO ASK HIS PERMISSION TO TAKE YOU TO HOLLYWOOD!

HE... HE'S NEVER LET ME GO! HE'S FORBIDDEN ME TO EVER LEAVE THE SETTLEMENT! BUT, IF YOU WISH, YOU MAY ASK HIM! HE'S AT THE FRAZIER POST! HE'LL BE BACK IN TWO DAYS!



TWO DAYS LATER, THE SWINGIN' PRIVATE AIR-TRANSPORT STILL SAT ON THE OPEN ICE-FIELD OUTSIDE THE SETTLEMENT. HUGH HOWARDS HAD STAYED WAITING FOR DOCTOR TERRY, WHOSE RETURN BY DOMESTIC AIR FROM THE DISTANT TANAGRA-POST...

LOOK HERE, EVANS! WHEN I'M BLADES AND WE LEAVING, HUGH HAS BUSINESS HERE! YEAH! BUSINESS WITH THAT GANG I SAW IN TOGETHER!



INDEED THEY HAD BEEN TOGETHER... ALMOST EVERY CHANCE THEY COULD! THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT TERRY, SOMETHING HUGH'D NEVER FELT ABOUT A GIRL BEFORE...

IN LOVE WITH YOU, OH, HUGH! DO YOU TERRY! I NEED YOU! YOU'VE BREATHED IT! I'VE NEVER HAD TO GO BACK TO THE BEER IN LOVE BEFORE! STAY WITH ME! I WANT HOW CAN I BE SURE? TO MARRY YOU!



HUGH CAUGHT TERRY IN HIS ARMS...



SH, HUGH! I'M SURE! AND AM I SURE, TERRY!



SUDDENLY A BLAST OF Icy WIND SWEPT THROUGH THE ROOM AS THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN...



THE FUN-CLAD DOCTOR STAMPED INTO THE ROOM...

BET OUT! LEAVE! WAIT, DADDY! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THAT'S HIS ALONE! HUGH WANTS TO MARRY HIS WANTS TO MARRY HIS HOUSE! BET OUT OF MY HOUSE! AND TAKE ME TO HOLLYWOOD!

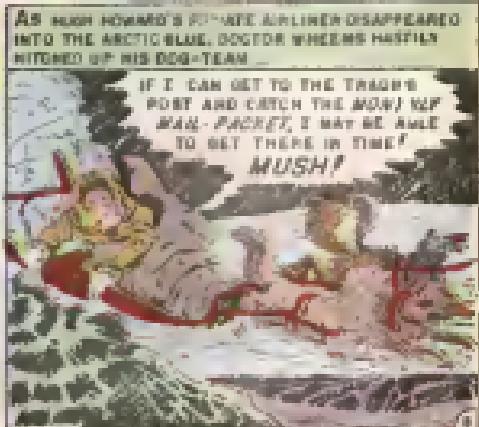
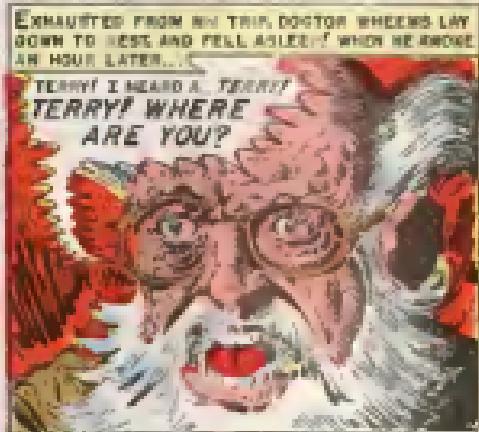
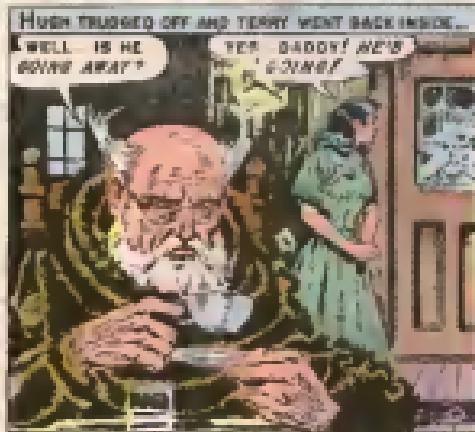


REVEREND FORGOT IT! YOU'RE NOT LEAVING, TERRY! YOU'RE STAYING HERE WITH ME!



BUT DOCTOR, I LOVE TERRY! I CAN GIVE HER SO MUCH!

HUGH WANTS TO MAKE A MOVIE-STAR OUT OF ME! HE'S A PRODUCER!



HEH, HEH! SO HUSH SPUNTED TERRY OUT OF THE COLD-COUNTRY TO THE LAND OF PALM TREES AND BLUR LIGHTS... HOLLYWOOD! THEY WERE MARRIED AS SOON AS THEY ARRIVED, AND THE FILM COLONY WENT WILD OVER THE PRODUCER'S HUNK SPOKE AND FUTURE STAR! SCREEN TESTS WERE MADE, A SCRIFT WAS CHOSEN, AND SHOOTING BEGAN...

ALL WENT WELL FOR A FEW WEEKS. THEN, THE MAKE-UP MAN CAME TO SEE HUSH...
GET JEET EES...
ABOUT YOUR MATE,
MISSED HOWARD?
SHE EES A LOVELY
WOMAN...BUT HER
SKIN LATELY...
STILL...

I HAD TROUBLE LATELY, MYSELF!
SHE IS...HANGOVER!
HER SKIN IS GREY,
CRACKED! I
CANNOT DO ANY-
THING WITH
HER!

THAT NIGHT, HUSH TOLD TERRY ABOUT THE MAKE-UP MAN'S COMPLAINT.

WHAT IS IT, HONEY?
AREN'T YOU SLEEPING?
ENOUGH REST!
AM I WORKING
YOU TOO HARD?

WE DON'T KNOW, HUSH!
I HAVEN'T BEEN FEELING
WELL! I'M
SELF!

THE NEXT DAY, TERRY DIDN'T SHOW UP AT THE STUDIO. HUSH RETURNED TO THEIR PALMITAL VILLA HOME TO PITCH IN.

TERRY! WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY ARE YOU WEARING
THOSE SLEEVES... AND
THAT FEEL?

SOMETHING'S
WRONG, HUSH! HONEY! SOME-
THING'S TERRIBLY
WRONG, BUT I'LL
GET OVER IT!

HOWEVER, TERRY DIDN'T GET OVER IT! IN FACT,
STRANGER THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN...

LOLLO! HONEY! WHY
DO MUCH PERFORMER?
YOU NEED FROM IT!

OH, HUSH! HONEY!
I NEVER SHOULD
HAVE COME TO
HOLLYWOOD!

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, TERRY LOCKED
HERSELF IN HER ROOM, REFUSING TO COME OUT!
SHE SPUNGED HER FOOD SENT UP AND LEFT OUT-
SIDE HER DOOR.

IF TERRY! YOU'RE SOF... IT'S TOO LATE
TO LET ME IN! TERRY! HONEY! SO AWAY!
PLEASE! I'LL GET A DOCTOR!
ALONE!

AND THEN DOCTOR HOWARDS ARRIVED! HE'D TRAVELED BY BOAT, MAIL, PLANE, TRAIN, AND PLANE TO GET TO THE HOWARDS HOME...

DOCTOR: WHERE IS SHE? WHERE IS SHE? HOWARDS: I'VE GOT TO TAKE HER HOME BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! YOU MIGHT SHOULD HAVE TAKEN HER AWAY!



THE ACCIDENT HAD PUNCHED ON THE HUMMER JUST OUTSIDE MY LABORATORY! I HAD WORKED WITH MONKEYS, BUT FOUND THAT EVEN THOUGH WE REVIVED THEM AFTER THEY'D BEEN A FEW MINUTES DEAD, THEY CONTINUED TO DECAY! GOLD WAS THE ONLY ANSWER! GOLD... TO PRESERVE THEM!



HOWARDS AND WORRINS FORCED OPEN TERRY'S DOOR! AS IT SWUNG AWAY, THE PETIT RAMSIS DOOR OF DEATH BURIED THEIR NOSE! TERRY LAY UPON HER BED IN A FLIMSY FINE DOWNT HER FLESH WAS ROTTED UPON HER BONES! HER FACE WAS A GRAY SKULL-LIKE DEATH-MASS... ITS BARED TEETH SET IN AN IDIOTIC GRIN! A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEP OVER RUSH AS HE STARED AT THE SHAMELESS PATRIOT IN MAILS OF HIS GONE LOVELY WIFE...



SHES UP IN HER ROOM, DOCTOR! SHE REFUSED TO SEE ANYONE! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER! FIRST MY MAKE-UP MAN COMPLAINED ABOUT HER SKIN, THEN SHE STARTED WEARING GLOVES AND A FEZ! NOW, SHE'S SECLUDED HERSELF! HER VOICE SOUNDED SO STRANGER TODAY! TODAY, SHE EVEN REFUSED TO ANSWER ME WHEN I CALLED!



YOU REVIVED
HER AFTER
DEATH?



THEN IT... IT IS TOO LATE! TAKE ME TO HER!

DOCTOR: WHERE IS SHE? HOWARDS: I'VE GOT TO TAKE HER HOME BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! YOU MIGHT SHOULD HAVE TAKEN HER AWAY!



TER. MR. HOWARDS? TERRY ARLEN WAS DEAD! I REVIVED HER! THAT WAS THE EXPERIMENT PROFESSOR ARLEN AND I HAD BEEN WORKING ON! I PUSHED HER TO THAT ARCTIC SETTLEMENT TO KEEP HER FROM DESPAIRING! I HAD TO TEACH HER EVERYTHING ALL OVER AGAIN! THE REVIVING ACTION REVERTS THE PATIENT TO INFANCYHOOD! TERRY HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DEAD FOR OVER SIX YEARS!



HEH, HEH! SO THAT'S WHY TERRY DOWED HERSELF WITH PERFUME! AFTER ALL, HOW MUCH CAN A BOOT STAND... EVEN A DEAD BOOT! FOOL HOW! WELL, A GOLD WIFE IS BETTER THAN NO WIFE AT ALL... STONE GOLD, THAT IS'MATE, IF TERRY'S STATED UP NORTH, SHE'D HAVE LASTED INDEFINITELY, INSTEAD OF BURNING ON THE HOOF! I'LL BURN THOSE HOT LIES! I HADN'T HELP THE SITUATION, BUT THAT OH, WELL! SHE'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN A ROUGH ACTRESS ANYWAYS! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE GRAY-KEEPER 'ATE! SEE YOU NEXT IN MY HAIR... THE VAULT OF HORROR!



THE END

ACID TEST!

"If you think I'm going to divorce you, Homer Wormwood, you're in error! I know how much you've come to hate me . . . and the feeling is mutual . . . but you're not getting away from me so easily! I've given up the best years of my life to you and you'll continue to support me as long as I live!"

Homer watched his wife disappear into the kitchen, and a weary smile flitted across his face. *Here it goes our way, Edna*, he thought . . . *as long as you live, eh? It must be a good deal less time than you think!*

His fingers shook as he took from his pocket a small bottle marked: CAUTION: SULPHURIC ACID! He glanced furtively toward the kitchen door, then removed the bottle cap and poured the contents of the vial into the drink he had been preparing for Edna. *This was the easiest way out!* Put Edna to the acid test, in a manner of speaking . . . and watch the agony of her fatal failure!

His wife's voice was grating on his ears again, continuing the argument he had purposely begun the moment he had returned from work that night. He wouldn't have so submit much longer to that despicable voice, Homer mused. *Sulphuric* was great at being my peace to people!

It was near six of Homer Wormwood's mortal hell, and just the night before he had determined to make that the last year . . . the last month, week and day! He had quietly tried to squirm loose by divorce, but it had resulted only in Edna redoubling her vituperative squalling about his inefficiency as a helpmate, provider and companion. Divorce was totally out of the question, she had screamed at him so often that it had become only a vague rumble in his ears. They were stuck with each

other . . . forever! And Homer had gradually, come to realize that Edna liked the state of things . . . thrived on his being trapped for life . . . envied over her ability to make him come and quail before her caustic sharp tongue. And realization that Edna derived enjoyment from these furious musings, had inspired Homer's plan for freedom. He had begun the fight straight with the idea of getting her wound up in another of her turbulent tantrums . . . was praying that she would become blind with pent-up rage! So blind that she would gulp down her drink without a moment's hesitation!

"Haven't you got anything to say in your own defense, you miserable fool?" Edna had reentered the room and was standing opposite him, her face flushed with the heat of her own words.

Not another word, Homer cautioned himself. *My silence always infuriates her. A couple more minutes of railing with no answer from me, and she'll grab that drink with screaming fury and gulp it down!*

Words continued to pour out of Edna like a raging torrent, and Homer stood his ground and looked sheepishly at the carpet. Suddenly, as though exhausted by her own violent clamoring, Edna stopped and picked up the cocktail glass Homer had filled for her. She held it poised in front of her lips:

She's going to drink it now! he thought. *If I keep up this defeated car act just a moment longer . . .*

"Pahh!" Edna snorted at that moment. "If there's anything I detest, it's a man who acts like a whipped dog! Maybe she will stir you up?" And with that, Edna hurled her drink in Homer's bewildered face.

A blaster of pain seared into his brain. His eyes became orbs of screaming hot agony . . . the stench of his own tortured flesh choked his nostrils. And the last thing Homer Wormwood heard, before a veil of unconsciousness descended upon him, was the wail of his own voice stretching aloud a single word: "ACID ACID . . . ACID . . . !

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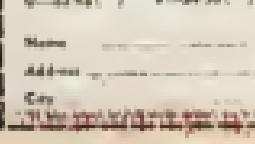
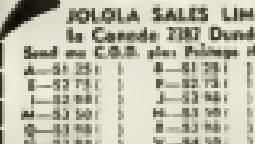


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See pg. 88



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THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Crypt here the old Crypt-keeper! But to his audience for these other two art forms, V. E. and G. W., who have been assassinating the most miserable mortified waste from their reading record books, it has recently obtained a collection of folk songs from some dead folk (Ladies and while I pounds a few pieces on my pulsating piano) I'll start my new medley with that old favorite, "On Top of Old Smokey," went my weird way through "The Long Crossroad," and for my final offering shall you with my rolled condition of the last-mentioned masterpiece by Country Blues, "Ghosts Train" (but while my local habitation keepers are taking the blues, let us discuss more earthly things!)

First of all, the newest Our "Great-of-the-House" releases... THE FRIENDLY GRAVE-DIGGERS AND MONUMENT CHISELERS (WE WRAP 'EM, THEM TAO TUM CLAMMING AND SHOP-LIFTING ASSOCIATION OF CINCINNATI, OHIO...) here we are on the lastest and newest! Four plots goes to *Death's Last Devil* (MKT 807-1), the last-blazing GROUNDS FOR NOBODY! (which is taken by *Creasing Joe O'Rourke*, for his shooting ROTTIN' TWICE!) To *Ghosts Train* (again go three plots because... for his country SINGER FOR A SPIDER) Energy Jack! Hogan, who's fourth spot with his bone-biting BOARD TO DEATH! The last, *WEIRD-O-LY*, here's it is.

And now a message from my other editor! They have instructed me to inform you seafarers who have written to them EACH of your letters has been carefully read, and the criticisms as well as comments evaluated, digested, and in most cases acted upon! They have asked me to sincerely thank all of you who have written! Their only request is that they feel it impossible to answer each and every letter personally, as they would like as much to do! The above statements contained in these statements are not necessarily those of your editor! In fact, I don't give a seafarer's exp' (they if you write or not!) 'Cause I'm sick to the death having these ridiculous artistic and business exp'essions to meet your various, vulgar requests! (Now here's not get MEETIN', old boy!) These modems constitute your *READ* and *WRITE*! That's what I mean nowww... Ed! (So don't) say it when with your new version should drop dead! Ed, stop keeping your teethless grins and roll 'em about your *JOHNSON*-Ed! Oh, yeah! As I'm sure you've noticed, there has been leakage of accusations in the stands making sure of my EC this week's such as *THINOR*, *HOLLOW*, *FEAR*, and *WEIRD*! Whoa! It's true that EC was the first to use these words... along with *HAUNTED*, *CRYPT*, and *VAULT*... in the *original* song! *Lord*, these words cannot be registered! Any old phony can come along and use these words as long as he doesn't use them in the same combinations that EC has used them in the others! That the few original modems combination prove your power readers who have yet to learn to appreciate an EC song by its form and words is tragic! The biggest cause when I was informed that same publisher had put out a book called "Telepathy Teacher" (the title of our *original* *Read*-less to say, I jumped down my other editor's throat...) and they in turn jumped down the next publisher's

throat... and the name will be changed! As far as these other titles that were equally close to EC's are concerned, all I can do is to ask you to open your blood-shot eyes, try and not cleave, and look for the EC and... the servers is plastered with *face*! So get away, habibi... come on! (Like, shush!) You're a swindling *telepath*! So stop rotting my twisted world!

And now for some real... a little room there is left for it!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

... I notice that you always use the expression, "habibi"! Then I don't like because although I am only *I* myself, I'm sure that many adults read your story. And I don't think of myself as a "habibi" either!

Robert Rector
Long Island, New York

Well old man, when you're as old as I am even an adult is a "habibi"! But when I call you "habibi" it's really a term of endearment... so don't be upset on your eyes in thinking whether you be 6 or 60! But if enough of the habibis write in and complain, I'll see if and I'll get a sensible

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

My father is a habibi, and now he only has your magazine in the rock in his sleep. When he wakes up and sees them, they have stood on end and said it makes *ME* old man a job easier!

Eduardo Pachano,
Tijuana City, N. J.

Lazy bather body suit!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

The store keeper where I get your mag keeps a copy hidden for me so I'm sure of getting it!

Robert Foster
Greenwood, Del.

Readers tell when the store might be visited. *Indeed*! Why don't you make doubly sure of getting every copy by advertising... The last one goes a supply... also encouraging business!

And sets of pictures of the Three Ghouls/Devils are still the... might as well not wait any longer to order... the price is 75 cents down... and this offer is limited! It will expire in 1963! And remember... only 12 sets to a customer (ouch of a quarter, of course) No wholesale prices!

The address for mail, picture orders, subscriptions, and insults is:

The Crypt-Keeper
Room 701, Dept. 20
225 Lexington Street
N.Y.C. 11, N.Y.

THIS LITTLE GEM OF BLACK
HORROR IS CALLED...

15 *“GHOULIE, it's
Coal inside!“*



TONY BROOK IS A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD HEAD ANGRY! THE VOICE CONTINUED! IT GRATED IN TONY'S EARS! THIS TIME IT WAS HIGH-PITCHED AND EXCITED! IT WAS ALWAYS DIFFERENT! LAST TIME IT'D BEEN LOW AND SOFT! THE TIME BEFORE THAT, IT'D BEEN LOUD AND SHRIEK...

“SO ON, TONY! YOUR AUNT'S NOT HOME ANY! IT'S A GOOD CHANCE YOU NEED A FEW PIECES ANYWAY! SO BREAK! SO ON DOWN!”

“NO! AUNT ARIES FORKED ME! I WOULDN'T AUNT ARIES SAID.”

“HE'LL BE FER KNOW, TONY! HOW ARE YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO WAKE UP THE SIDEWALK WITHOUT A HUNK OF COAL? JUST ONE PIECE... ONE SMALL PIECE!”

“SEE, I DO NEED IT BADLY! FORKED IS THE SAME! I GOTTA KEEP GOING! GASP! I'LL DO IT! I'LL GO DOWN INTO THE COAL-BIN!”



TOBY OPENED THE DOOR IN THE KITCHEN THAT LED TO THE CELLAR AND TIPTOED DOWN THE STEPS. HE HESITATED AT THE BOTTOM, PEEKING THROUGH THE BLOOM AT THE BOARD-PARTITION NEXT TO THE FERNAGE THAT SEPARATED OFF THE COAL-BIN FROM THE REST OF THE CELLAR.



OVERHEAD, A BOARD CRACKED! TOBY STOPPED BEHIND THE COAL-BIN DOOR, LOOKING UP.
MAYBE... MAYBE... HAD SHE ITS AUNT AGNES?
COULDNT HAVE GONE TO THE STORE NO JACK SO FAST!



TOBY LISTENED FOR A MOMENT! THERE WAS NO SOUND! HE SNAPPED OPEN THE COAL-BIN DOOR AND STEPPED IN... ONTO THE BLACK DUST-COVERED FLOOR...

HEF THE COAL! I DON'T WORK ALMOST ALL DAY! THE HILL! UPTAUNT AGNES! DUCKYBIRD! OUGHT TO ORDER A FEW PIGS! MORE!



A FAINT LIGHT FILTERED THROUGH THE BLACKENED CELLAR WINDOW RISE UP IN THE WALL OF THE COAL BIN... TOBY KNELT AND PICKED UP THREE OF THE LARGEST LUMPS HE COULD SEE...



TOBY WENT OUT OF THE COAL-BIN... CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND HIM... AND TIPTOED UPSTAIRS JUST AS HE CAME THROUGH THE CELLAR DOOR INTO THE KITCHEN, THE FRONT DOOR SLAMMED...



TOBY'S FIRST MOVE WAS TO RUN AWAY. BUT BEFORE HE COULD MAKE A MOVE, HIS AUNT WAS IN THE KITCHEN BEARING DOWN AT HIM...



TOBY! DON'T YOU HEAR ME CALL YOU TO HELP ME WITH THESE BUNDLES?

E. I'M SORRY AUNT AGNES! HERETOUE ME DONT

TOBY EXTENDED TWO BLACKENED, COAL-DUST COATED HANDS! HIS MINT GASPED! HER FACE GREW PURPLE WITH RAGE!



TOBY! YOU'VE BEEN IN THE COAL-BIN AGAIN!

ROSY! WHO ARE T?

AUNT ANNES SLAMMED THE BUNDLES DOWN ON THE KITCHEN TABLE.

LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE FATHER! I TOLD YOU I NEEDED A PIECE OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO KEEP SCORE! IF YOU WENT DOWN THERE'S A BANK THIS THERE AGAIN! AFTERNOON THE FORCE REMINDED ME!

ARE YOU GOING TO START TELLING ME ABOUT THAT STUPID FORCE YOU KEEP HEARING? YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER, A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING LAR!

IM NOT A LAR! I HEAR A VOICE! HONEST! IT TALKS TO ME! IT MAKES ME DO THINGS!



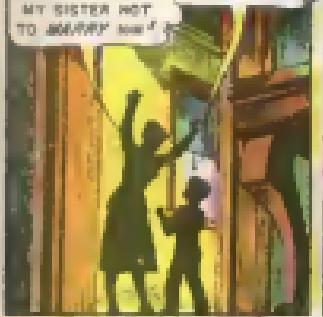
SHUT UP! YOU'RE JUST BAD, THAT'S ALL! AND GOOD LIKE YOUR FATHER! OH, I WISHED MY SISTER HADN'T MARRIED HIM!

STOP IT! STOP TALKING LIKE THAT! MY DADDY WAS WONDERFUL!

HAN! HE WAS A MORTLESS DRUNKARD! IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM, YOUR MOTHER'D BE ALIVE TODAY!

HE WASN'T A DRUNKARD! HE WASN'T! HOW DO YOU THINK HE AND YOUR MOTHER WERE KILLED? HE WAS DEAD-DRUNK WHEN HE DROVE HOME THAT NIGHT!

NOT I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU!



HE USED TO HEAR VOICES, FOOL VOICES, MAN! THEY WERE THE D.F.S., HE CALLED NOTHING BUT TROUBLE FOR ALL OF US! LOOK AT ME! FOR, I'M STUCK WITH FOOL!

THE MURSE SAYS YOU HATE ME. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE ALWAYS TALKING AT ME! HE

I TELL AT YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE BAD! HOW YOU LISTEN TO ME, FOOL! MAN! THE NEXT TIME YOU GO DOWN INTO THAT COAL BIN, I'LL SEND YOU AWAY TO THE GURMAN HOME!

NO, MURSE MURSE! PLEASE DON'T SEND ME AWAY! PLEASE! I'LL BE GOOD! I'LL BE GOOD!





TONY UNLACED HIS SHOES AND TROTTED OFF. HIS AUNT BLADED AT HIM.



AUNT AGNES THUMBED THROUGH THE PHONE BOOK, FOUND WHAT SHE WAS LOOKING FOR, AND DIALED A NUMBER.



MEANTIME, UPSTAIRS, TONY'S MOTHER HAD HIS TROUBLES.

"NORA, TONY! IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR THE GAME! THE KIDS ARE WAITING FOR YOU! BEGONE! YOU'RE NOT TO KEEP COOKS! THE COAL'S IN YOUR POCKETS!"

THE VOICE WAS SILENT THIS TIME. PLEASE, IT REMINDED TONY OF HIS MOTHER'S VOICE. AT LEAST THE LITTLE THAT HE CHILD REMEMBERS.

"IT'S DARK, TONY! JUST CLIMB DOWN THE TRELLIS OUTSIDE. ONLY TRYING TO KNOCK IN HERE! I'LL BE BETTER TO YOU!"

TONY IS IN THE BEDROOM, LYING ON THE BUNK BED.



THE VOICE WAS OUTSIDE THE WINDOW! IT DRI-FIRED BACK TO TOBY FROM HALF-WAY DOWN TO THE GROUND...

“HOOH! IT’S A SEEF IT LOOKS A EASY AS A EASY!”



TOBY SLIPPED ONE FOOT OVER THE WINDOW SILL... THEN THE OTHER! HE STARTED DOWN THE TRELLIS SUDDENLY A TRUCK FULLLED UP BEHIND THE HOUSE.

HOLY A TRUCK! HEY, BOY! THE DRIVER SEES YOU’LL BET ME! HUH!!



TOBY DROPPED TO THE GROUND AS AUNT AGNES EXPLODED THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR...

“I’M THE FOEF BET IN THE HOUSE! MAMAN I SAW YOU AND DROVE CARE OF YOU LATER!”



TOBY SCRABBLED INTO THE HOUSE AND UP TO HIS ROOM. AUNT AGNES TOOK THE LOGSMITH INTO THE CELLAR...

“DAD, MAMAN I GOT YUH! YOU WANT A LOG OR’ER SO THE EIS CAN’T OPEN IT. ENT ONE THAT OPENS WITH A JIFFY!”

THAT’S IT AND... DA, DAD! IT’S BETTER TO ORDER SOME MORE COAL!



“WHILE THE LOGSMITH BUSHED HIMSELF ON THE COAL DOOR, AUNT AGNES PHONED THE COAL COMPANY...

“THAT’S A LOT OF COAL FOR ONE DELIVERY! MAMAN, I SAW YOU TONIGHT AND I ALWAYS ORDER FOUR TONS AT A TIME!”



OF COURSE, TOBY WAS PUNISHED FOR BREAKING OUT OF THE WINDOW, BUT HE PROHIBITED MORE THAN HE’D IGNORE THE VOICE FROM THER ON! THE NEXT DAY...

“HOW YOU’RE TO BEIF IN FOUR ROOM WHILE I’M AT THE STORE! IF THE COAL SHOULD GONE, JUST TELL THEM TO PUT IT IN THROUGH THE CELLAR WINDOW! AND DON’T FORGET WHAT YOU PROMISED LAST NIGHT.”



“DON’T WORRY, AUNT AGNES! I’M NEVER GONE TO LISTEN TO THE VOICE AGAIN!”

“A LITTLE LATER, TOBY LOOKED UP FROM HIS TOY! SOMEONE WAS CALLING HIM...

“TOBY TOBL HELP ME! GODDOMMATES PLEASE!”

“HURT WHY IT’S AUNT AGNES CALLING ME?”



TOBY TIPPED DOWN STAIRS. THE VOICE WAS COMING FROM THE CELLAR.

“IS THAT YES, TOBY? COME YOU AUNTIE DOWN? PLEASE? PLEASE? LET ME OUT OF THE COAL-BIN!”



“THE COAL-BIN?”

“YES! THE DOOR LOOKED SHUT OR HE’D COME IN TO SEE IF THE COAL-BIN WAS OPEN SO THEY COULD DELIVER THE COAL AWAY! THEY’LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!”



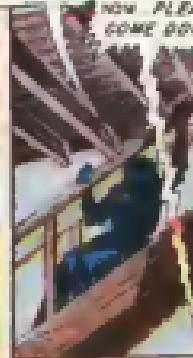
“AH, NO! I KNOW YOU! YOU’RE NOT GOING TO SET ME OUT! THE BIN IS IN THE LOOK-OUT! JUST TURN IT! PLEASE! IT’S QUICKLY!”



I PROMISED I TOBY I AM WOULDN’T LISTEN YOUR AUNTIE TO YOU ANYMORE. PLEASE! PLEASE! AND I WOULDN’T COME DOWN! PLEASE! YOU JUST SOUND I PLEASE! LIKE AUNTIE ASHLEY YESTERDAY! YOU TRIED TO SOUND LIKE MY MUMMY...

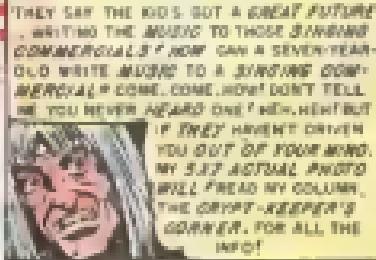
“WAS MY DADDY A DRUNKARD? AUNTIE ASHLEY?”

“NO, TOBY! YOUR DADDY WAS A GOOD MAN! NOW PLEASE COME DOWN.”



THE SHRIEK SCREAMS OF GELIGHT FROM THE CHILDREN BANGING AROUND THE COAL TRUCK AND THE DESPAIRING FOG AS THE BLACK FUEL GREGDED DOWN THE TIN SLIDE DEGREED BUT AUNT ASHLEY SINKERS OF TERROR LITTLE BY LITTLE. THE HYDRAULIC-LIFTS RAISED THE TRUCK-BODY UNTIL FOUR TONS OF COAL HAD POURRED INTO THE COAL-BIN BEFOR THE TIN CELLAR BURST! FOUR TONS ENOUGH TO CRUSH THE FLOORING OF IRON, TO LEAVE A FRAG, BITTER OIL POOL.

NOW COESN’T THAT STORM LEAVE YOU WITH A LUMP IN YOUR THROAT? HEH-HEH! DID OLD JONES? IN FACT THEY FOUND ONE IN HER SWAG, AND RED JONES IN HER MOUTH! WHEN THEY FINALLY DUG HER OUT LUMPS OF COAL, THAT IS! AS FOR TOBY... WELL, HE COESN’T HEAR VOICES ANYMORE. NOW, IT’S A SPARKY! GROWL STAR! THEY SEE THE KIDS GOT A GREAT FUTURE... SITTING THE BANJO TO THOSE SWAGS COMMERCIALS! HOW CAN A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD WHITE MORE TO A JUNGLE COMMERCIAL? COME, COME, HOW DON’T TELL ME YOU NEVER HEARD ONE! HEH-HEH! BUT IF THEY HAVEN’T DRIVEN YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND, MY 557 ACTUAL PHOTO WILL FREAD MY COLUMN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER’S CORNER, FOR ALL THE INFO!”



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLOEE SO I GOTTA MIND UP THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAD-HAUS MAIN. CAN YOU KNOW WHY THEY GIVE ME THIS SHIT? 'CAUSE I'M THE MOST HORRIBLE! DON'T WORRY! MY IDIOT EDITORS KNOW A BAD THING! YEP... IT'S THE OLD WITCH. WISHER OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! THE FIRE IS LIT UNDER MY FOOL-SMOKE-BLAST, AND I'M READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER OF MY POTRO-POSITIONS OF PULSATIN PLEASANTNESS! THIS LITTLE LADY OF LURID LOATHSOMENESS WILL DEFINITELY WHET YOUR APPETITE! I CALL IT... BOO...

**NOURNIN',
AMBROSE...**



ARCHER GENTLY PUSHED OPEN THE HUG IRON GATE OF HIS UNCLE'S VAST ESTATE AND WALKED UP THE TREE-LINED ROAD TOWARD THE PALMIAL HOUSE THAT LOOMED UP BEFORE HIM IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS.

"SO THIS IS HAILEY OF MANOR! I KNEW THAT UNCLE AMBROSE WAS WEAKLY, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED THIS! I WONDER WHY THEY'VE BECOME RECLUSES... HE AND AUNT ELBA? OH, WELL! I'LL GET ALL THE DOPE EVENTUALLY..."



ANDREW STEPPED ONTO THE PERTICOS OF THE IMPRESSIVE MANSION AND LIFTED THE HEAVY BRASS KNOCKER THAT ADORNED THE MASSIVE OAK FRONT-DOOR. THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED WITHIN.

"UH! THE PLACE
GIVES ME THE creeps,
HOW ANYONE COULD
STAY HERE FOR THREE
YEARS WITHOUT
LEAVING IT BEATS
ME!"

AS THE SHIP OF THE DOOR-KNOCKER SWUNG AWAY, SLOW FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED. THE HOLE DOOR SWUNG OPEN AND A WIZZED WRINKLED FACE PEERED OUT.

"YES? ARE... ARE YOU MY UNCLE AMBROSE? AMBROSE MARLEY?"

THE OLD MAN'S WIZZED FACE LIT UP AND A SMILE SPREAD ACROSS IT. HE STEPPED EACH PERTINENT STEP FORWARD TO ENTER.

"THAT'S ME! COME IN! YOU MUST BE RIGHT, MR. ANDREW. MY WIFE'S BEEN SICK FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS. YOU AND AUNT ELSA..."

THE OLD MAN CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOOKED AROUND PERTINENTLY. THEN HE MOVED CLOSE TO ANDREW.

"DON'T... DON'T BE TOO DISAPPOINTED WITH AUNT ELSA, MR. ANDREW. SHE'S NOT WELL."

"OH! I'M SORRY TO HEAR IT! WHAT'S WRONG?"

THE OLD MAN CONTINUED TO PEER FROM SIDE TO SIDE. THEN, HE TAPPED HIS TEMPLE.

"SHE... SHE'S NOT WELL... HERE!"

THE FIRST DEATH...

"OF COURSE! YOU COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN! IT HAPPENED THREE YEARS AGO! ONE OF YOUR DISTANT COUSINS CAME TO STAY WITH OUR LOVELY WOMAN! SHE DIED IN HER SLEEP!"

"H? I... I... DIDN'T KNOW! BUT YOU SAID THAT WAS THE FOREST! WERE THERE OTHERS?"

"TWO OTHERS! MY AGED BROTHER CAME TO STAY WITH US ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO. HE... HE WAS OLDER THAN I. HE PASSED AWAY ABOUT A MONTH LATER! THEN MY WIFE'S NIECE CAME! IT WAS TRAGIC! SUCH A FRIGHTFUL ENDING..."

"YOU... YOU'D BETTER TELL ME ABOUT AUNT ELSA. UNCLE!" IS THERE SOMETHING I SHOULD KNOW?"



HER AGGRESSION'S DEATH
YOU
WERE THE LAST STRANGER
I MEAN
SHE TOOK THE FIRST
TWO HARDS, BUT THE
LAST, WELL... SOME-
THING JUST SNAPPED!

EH-HAH! SHE'LL MEAN
YOU! NO! NOT EXACTLY!
SHE, SHE'S JUST A
LITTLE OVER-EXAG-
ERATIVE, EMOTIONAL...
YOU KNOW, SUPER-
SENSITIVE! SHE
TENDS TO EXAG-
GERATE!

HON, HON! JUST
HUMOR HER.
ANDREW! SHE
DON'T MEAN
ANY HARM?
AMBROSE
WHO WAS
IT?

A FRAIL, THIN, WIDE-EYED OLD WOMAN TOTTERED
INTO THE LIBRARY WHERE ANDREW AND AMBROSE
WERE TALKING! SHE STARED AT AMBROSE.
WHAT ARE? THIS IS ANDREW
WHAT'S HE DOING
HERE?
WHO'S HE? THIS IS ANDREW
MANFRED, MY DEAR!
I WROTE TO HIM...
INVITING HIM TO
STAY WITH US!

ANDREW'S
STELLA, MY
SISTER...
BUT I HAD IT
COME TO
THAT?

I, I DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
UNCLE AMBROSE.
WHAT DOES SHE
MEAN?

NOTHING, NOT
NOTHING!
YOU SEE, YOU
ARE OUR ONLY
LIVING HERE
NOW!

THE OTHERS
ARE DEAD!
ALL DEAD!
THREE OF
THEM ARE
OUT THERE
IN THE
GRAVEYARD!

PLEASE, ELLA!
LET'S TALK
ABOUT MORE
PLEASANT
THINGS!

THIS IS A
WONDERFUL
LIBRARY,
UNCLE
AMBROSE!
YOU HAVE
SO MANY
BOOKS!

YES! THOU-
SANDS OF
THEM! DO YOU
READ, ANDREW?

A LITTLE,
A LITTLE,
AUNT ELLA! A
LITTLE!

EVEN READ
"MACBETH".
ANDREW? WHERE
IT SAID, "MURDER
WILL OUT!"

ELLIE!
COME, ANDREW!
I WILL SHOW
YOU YOUR
BOOKS!



ELSA STARED AT ANDREW AS HE PASSED HER AND FOLLOWED AMBROSE UP THE MARBLE STAIRS TO THE SECOND FLOOR. THEY STOPPED BEFORE A DOOR AT THE END OF A LONG HALL.

"I HOPE YOU WILL BE COMFORTABLE IN HERE, ANDREW!"

"I'M SURE I WILL BE, UNCLE AMBROSE!"

ANDREW'S BEDROOM WAS LARGE AND LAVISHLY FURNISHED WITH EXPENSIVE ARTICLES! A STONE FIREPLACE COVERED ONE WALL OF THE ROOM! ANDREW TOUCHED A MATCH TO THE WOOD PILED ON THE ANDIRON, AND SOON THE FIRE'S CHEERY GLOW DANCED ACROSS THE FLOOR! SUDDENLY...

"WHO... WHO'S THERE?"

"IT'S ME... ANDREW! YOUR AUNT ELSA!"

THE OLD WOMAN STARED AT ANDREW FROM THE PARTLY OPENED DOOR...

"DON'T COME IN AUNT! I'VE BEEN SIT DOWN! I'VE COME TO VISIT YOU, ANDREW!"

"MURK ME, AUNT ELSA!"

"GET OUT, ANDREW! GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE WHO NEVER COME BACK! I'M A FRIEND... A HORRIBLE FRIEND!"

"YOU MEAN... UNCLE AMBROSE?"

"YES! I MUSTN'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN! IT'S HORRIBLE HORRIBLE! HE IS A HORRIBLE HORRIBLE!"

"ELSA!"

AMBROSE STOOD FAMING IN THE DOORWAY. HIS WRINKLED FACE PURPLE WITH ANGER! HE SNARLED AT THE OLD WOMAN.

"ELSA GET TO BED... THIS MINUTE!"

"T-TELL AMBROSE! I'M SORRY!"

THE OLD WOMAN LOOKED AT ANDREW. HER EYES PLEADING, AS SHE SHUFFLED OFF.

"FIREBURN, ANDREW! MURDER WILL OUT!"

"HUMP ON, YES, AUNT ELSA!"

"GOOD-NIGHT, ANDREW! COME, MY DEAR!"

The most moving advice was answered by a frantic pounding on his bedroom door.

"**ANGRY! WAKE UP!** BUT WHAT DO
YOU SAY? IT'S... A MINUTE, UNCLE
IT'S AUNT
SLEEPING!"



ME, ME! THE PLOT SUCCEED,
EH, BIGGEST TELL, THE DOG
CAME AND PRONOUNCED OLD
ELSA DEAD OF NATURAL CAUSES!
ANDREW'S UNCLE WAS PRETTY
BROKEN UP OVER ELSA'S DEATH!
THE FUNERAL WAS DIGNIFIED
AND SHORT! THEY CARRIED THE
OLD SAL OUT TO THE FAMILY
MAUSOLEUM, AND THAT WAS
THAT... P.



ONE EVENING, ANDREW WAS BROWSING AROUND THE LIBRARY LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO READ. A TITLE CAUGHT HIS EYE: "MAGDELENE" HE COULD ALMOST HEAR AUNT ELIZA'S VOICE.

EVER READ
"MADAME BORDREE"
WHERE IT SAYS
"MADAME WILL OUT"



ОНЕ ВСЕНИЯ. A FEW DAYS AFTER SILVER'S DEATH

WHAT'S THAT?
LOOKS LIKE A FLOWER
DOWN THERE - SORRY
TOWARD THE MUSO-
LEUM! OH, IT'S
WHOLE ANOTHER
AND HE'S CARRYING
A FLOWER!



ANDREW REACHED UP AND PULLED DOWN THE ROCK HE SPOTTED IT...

WHY, DON'T THESE ISN'T 'MADAME' AT ALL? IT'S A DRAFFY AUNT ELSA'S CHAIR!



HED, HED 'TEP' THERE IT WAS! HIDDEN BETWEEN THE LEATHER-BOUND COVERS OF 'MACBETH'! AUNT ELISABETH HAD IT! ANDREW READ IT! EVERY PAGE ELISABETH'S WORDS WERE TRUE. BUT SOME ENTRAILS HAD BEEN...

...AND THIS ONE, INSPECTOR LISTER? I KNOW HOW NOW HE MURDERED THEM! SUFFOCATION! HE COOLED THEM SO THEY COULDN'T RESIST. THEN AMBROSE KILLED THEM WITH A PILLER! BUT, WHY, WHY?

...AND THIS ONE? HOW I KNOW WHY? IT MUST NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN! I MUST NOT LET IT! AND THE LAST ENTRY! ANOTHER HAS COME! HE WILL BEAR IT! I MUST BURN HIM! THE FEDS WILL DO TO HIM WHAT HE HAS DONE TO THE OTHERS! IF AMBROSE WERE TO FIND OUT THAT I MEAN TO TELL MACBETH EVERYTHING, HE WOULD KILL ME!



HED! AND YOU SAY AMBROSE CAME IN THAT NIGHT AND INTERROGATED ELISABETH! JUST AS SHE WAS ABOUT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING?

THAT'S RIGHT, SIR. BUT ONE THING PUZZLES ME IF AMBROSE MURDERED ELISABETH, WHY DOES HE LOOK SO HURT?

IF HE MURDERED HER? WHY THE DOG FELT IT WAS A NATURAL DEATH?

SUFFOCATION LOOKS LIKE A NATURAL DEATH!

THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE THIS WAY OR THE OTHER, MR. DEMENT, IS TO GET PERMISSION TO EXAMINE THE BODY AND PERFORM AN AUTOPSY!



PROVING NOT TO REVEAL THAT ANDREW HAD TIPPED THEM OFF, TWO DETECTIVES CAME TO SEE AMBROSE HAWLEY...

IF YOU REFUSE, MR. HAWLEY, WE CAN GET A COURT ORDER GIVING US PERMISSION TO DO IT OVER FROM OBSTRUCTIONS!

AMBROSE'S AGED BODY SHOOK AS HE SOURED! A TEAR TRICKLED DOWN HIS WILDED CHEEK.

PLEASE! IF YOU HAVE NO BODY TO DISTURB HER! SHE'S BEEN LONED TO MISTY! LEAVE HER! I SEE YOUR SON... SO... LEAVE HER! HE...

LET'S GO, SHANE, KELLY!



THE TWO DETECTIVES LEFT THE SCREECHING OLD MAN. AMBROSE STOPPED THEM AT THE DOOR.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOUR HARRIET REFUSED TO EAT ME, BERNERT!

LATER THAT EVENING, ANDREW MARSHED FROM HIS MGR. AS OLD AMBROSE CROSSED THE GARDEN TO THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM.

IT'S BETTER FOLLOW ME THIS TIME! HE SHRIEKED TRYING TO HIDE THE BODY!

AFTER THE OLD MAN ENTERED THE CRYPT, ANDREW WENT CONSPIRATORIALLY ACROSS THE GARDEN. THE DOOR TO THE MAUSOLEUM WAS PARTLY OPEN. ANDREW PEERED IN.

OLD LORD!

A WAVE OF HAUNTED AND REVULSION SWEPT OVER ANDREW. HE TURNED AWAY FROM THE HORRIBLE SIGHT AND RAN TOWARD THE HOUSE. FINALLY, HE COULD

NOT STAND IT ANY LONGER. HE TURNED BACK. BERNERT THAT HE'S HARLEY! CRIED. FOUR WHAT? WHERE'S YOUR UNCLE? IN THE CRYPT, BERNERT.

THE DETECTIVES HURRIED TO THE MAUSOLEUM AND FLUNG THE DOOR OPEN. AMBROSE HADLY SPUR AROUND FROM THE PARTIALLY EATEN CORPSE OF HIS LATE BROTHER. HIS TEETH HAD BEEN BURST, AND FROTHY MOUTH DROOLING AT THE INTRUSORS.

LET ME TELL YOU, YOU WERE RIGHT, INSPECTOR! HE'S HE A SHOOL!



THEY DRAINED THE SHRIEKING, CLAWING OLD MAN FROM HIS VICTIM AND TOOK HIM AWAY. LATER THEY RETURNED TO THE CRYPT AND EXAMINED THE OTHER COFFINS.

YOU SEE, BERNERT! WHEN WE TOOK OUT FROM THE UNDERTAKER IN TOWN THAT HARLEY REFUSED TO ALLOW HIM TO BURIAL THE BODIES, WE KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG! THE OTHER COFFINS HAVE BEEN STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH, TOO!

THAT'S WHY HE INVITED YOU HERE TO HARLEY MANOR! LIKE THE OTHERS, HE INTENDED YOU TO BE ONE OF HIS MEAL-SHROTS!

HEEEEEE! LUCKY THAT I GOTAWAY WITH OLD AMBROSE WHEN THEY DID HE WAS RUMMING OUT OF RELATIVES! THANKS TO OLD ELLA WHO WAS FED UP WITH THE WHOLE AFFAIR, ANDREW WAS SAVED FROM A VERY DISTASTEFUL EXPERIENCE! AND YOU'D LIKE TO BE SAVED FROM A DISTASTEFUL EXPERIENCE, DON'T

SEND FOR MY PHOTO! THE METHOD FOR GETAWAY HAD TO BE FOUND IN THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER... FOR YOU FRIENDS WHO LIKE THAT SORT OF STUFF! I'LL TELL YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! TILL THEN, SHOOL-A-YE- AND UNPLEASANT DREAMS!



IN ALL THY WAYS-ACKNOWLEDGE HIM



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